

ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC-SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICIALS INTERNATIONAL, INC.

NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR TRAINING STANDARD

INTRODUCTION

The role of the public safety telecommunicator in the receipt (via 9-1-1 and by other means), processing and dispatch of public safety agencies is of vital importance. To adequately prepare the public safety telecommunicator to provide this service in a professional manner that fulfills the need and expectation of the public and agencies served, requires that an adequate level of training be provided.

APCO is recognized nationally and internationally as the foremost professional organization representing the interests of public safety communications agencies and personnel.

APCO is dedicated to the proposition that, as the first point of contact the public has in requesting public safety services, the training provided to public safety telecommunicators must encompass certain components.

Currently many states have developed and require that a standardized level of training be provided to public safety telecommunicators. Other states are presently in the process of developing standardized training and still other states have yet to begin to develop standardized training.

At the 1995 APCO annual conference, APCO President Ross Morris announced that APCO would undertake the development of a National Public Safety Telecommunicators Training Standard. The effort would be called APCO Project 33.

The result of this effort is the Standard contained in Appendix A (attached).

STANDARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

President Morris assigned the task of developing the Standard to the APCO Operating Procedures and Training Committee.

A Standard Development Committee was established and comprised of subject matter experts representing various public safety communications agencies throughout the nation. The committee members are:

- **Thera Bradshaw, Director (Project 33 Chair)**
Clark County, Washington
Regional Department of Emergency Services
710 West 13th Street
Vancouver, WA 98660
- **Chris Fischer, Director**
Valley Communications Center
23807 98th Avenue, South
Kent, WA 98031-3158
- **Eriks Gabliks, Coordinator**
Oregon Board of Public Safety Standards and Training
550 North Monmouth Avenue
Monmouth, OR 97361-1330
- **H.W. "Woody" Glover, Executive Director**
9-1-1 Network of East Texas
1121 ESE Loop 323, Suite 220
Tyler, TX 75701-9660
- **Bill Hinkle, Operations Director**
Hamilton County, Ohio
Division of Communications
2377 Civic Center Drive
Cincinnati, OH 45231
- **Nancy Pollock, Executive Director**
Metropolitan 9-1-1 Board
Metro Counties Government Center
2099 University Avenue, West
St. Paul, MN 55104-3431
- **Steve Proctor, Director**
State of Utah
Department of Information and Technical Services
600 State Office Building
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

STANDARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (continued)

- **Steve Souder, Administrator**
Arlington County, Virginia
Emergency Communications Center
1400 North Uhle Street, 5th Floor
Arlington, VA 22201-9998
- **Chris Warren, Coordinator**
9-1-1 Emergency Dispatch Academy
South City Campus
1575 South State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84115-1610

Project 33 oversight was provided by APCO President-Elect Marilyn Ward of the Orlando Florida Police Department Communications Section.

STANDARD DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

So that the APCO Project 33 Standard Development Committee could benefit from a knowledge of what States had developed telecommunicator training courses, were in the process of developing same or did not have telecommunicator courses and what the courses were comprised of, there existed a need to solicit and assemble this data. In a demonstration of cooperation and commitment to perpetuating the public safety communications profession, APCO formed a collaboration with the National Emergency Number Association (NENA). NENA, in announcing the creation of a National Resource Center agreed to provide APCO with independent statistical data on the current status of training programs and curriculum in use throughout the country. Using this data the APCO Standard Committee was able to analyze existing State level training curriculum. The committee research yielded valuable information and provided the foundation on which the APCO National Public Safety Telecommunicator Training Standard was developed. The APCO Standard Committee believes that its product reflects a broad, widely accepted, consensus within the public safety committee. Prior to adoption, comments on the standard were solicited from a broad spectrum of individuals involved in public safety communications. The comments received were discussed by the Committee and, where appropriate, were incorporated into the Standard. The APCO Standard Committee understands the constraints placed on the development, administration and application of training programs, including limited resources, independent research and other factors. It is emphasized that the APCO National Public Safety Telecommunicator Training Standard is a **minimum** training standard and nothing in the Standard should be construed to limit or restrict any additional training that an agency may elect to provide. To the contrary, States/Jurisdictions/Agencies are encouraged to enhance and modify the training recommended in this standard.

The chart below represents:

- a. The training categories included in the APCO Standard contained in APPENDIX A;
- b. The **minimum** number of training hours recommended by APCO for those categories;
- and,
- c. The national average of training hours provided for these categories, identified as a result of the data collected.

a. APCO Standard training modules	b. APCO recommended minimum training hours	c. National average training hours
1. Roles and Responsibilities	4	4
2. Legal Aspects	2	2
3. Interpersonal Communications	6	6
4. Technologies	2	2
5. Telephone Techniques/ Call Processing	7	7
6. Call Classification	8	12
7. Radio Communications	8	12
8. Stress Management	3	3
Total	40 hours	48 hours

DEFINITIONS

PUBLIC SAFETY -

The public's right, exercised through Federal State or Local government as prescribed by law, /to protect and preserve life, property and natural resources and to serve the public welfare. (This is the definition proposed by the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee [PSWAC])

PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES -

Those services rendered by or through Federal, State, or Local government entities in support of public safety duties. (This is the definition proposed by the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee [PSWAC])

PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR -

An individual employed by a public safety agency whose primary responsibility is to receive and process emergency and non-emergency calls for public safety service.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER STANDARDS

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) was tasked with and recently developed a job performance standard for Public Safety Telecommunicator, NFPA Proposed Standard 1061. The APCO Standards Committee recognizes that NFPA 1061 is a job performance standard and not a training standard for Public Safety Telecommunicator. The purpose of NFPA 1061 is to specify minimum job performance requirements. NFPA 1061 deals with the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to the role of public safety telecommunicator and is viewed by the APCO Standards Committee as complimentary to the APCO Project 33 National Public Safety Telecommunicator Training Standard. NFPA 1061 identifies skills and abilities that individuals in the industry will need to acquire to be considered a professional in this field.

The APCO Project 33 Standard Committee is supportive of the recommendations of NFPA 1061 regarding Continuing Education and In-Service Training. The proposed standard states "Training and Education should be tied directly to skill demonstration and maintenance." "In-service training should be conducted whenever skill levels fall below minimum standards, the work place experiences a significant change in procedure, or obtains new equipment". "A variety of outside training and educational opportunities are beneficial to both the individual and the organization." "The authority having jurisdiction should develop a policy regarding the participation by the employees in in-service training and identify acceptable outside training and continuing education programs." "The content of and attendance at all training programs should be documented." Continuing education course work in telecommunicator training consists of review and advanced training and instruction in core and supplemental training areas and should be conducted on a regularly scheduled basis to maintain and enhance telecommunicator skill and knowledge.

STANDARD COMPLIANT TRAINING CURRICULUM

The Standard committee recognizes that there are many training programs in place throughout the country. It is not APCO's intent to question or dictate to these existing programs, but rather to create a national training standard structure to provide consistency in training and is intended to serve as a model that others in the profession may use in providing training to meet the recognized **minimum** training standard.

The APCO Standard provides and should be recognized as the **"industry standard"** for Public Safety Telecommunicators. State and Local agency administrators should be responsible for making the determination whether the training program being used or proposed, meets the recognized **minimum** training standard, and whether additional training beyond that specified in the standard may be necessary.

Agencies utilizing their own "in house" training programs are encouraged to modify or update these programs, if necessary, to meet or exceed the National Public Safety Telecommunicator Training Standard.

The Standard committee encourages that professional quality training curriculum be developed by interested and qualified parties to support instruction that will meet or exceed the National Public Safety Telecommunicator Training Standard.

TRAINING

The APCO recommended **minimum** training hours for each of the eight (8) modules in the Standard are provided on page 4 (Standard Development Methodology), for a total of forty (40) hours instruction. The training should be provided within twelve (12) months from the date a person begins employment as a public safety telecommunicator.

How an agency presents an introduction to the training and the time provided for same is optional. The agency is strongly encouraged to develop the means by which knowledge, skill and ability gained in the training is measured. This may include, but is not limited to; testing, simulation, evaluation, etc.

Additionally, the Standard does not include the instruction required and/or provided by State and/or Local agencies, but may include an introduction to same:

- Federal, State and Local Legislation and Regulation
- National Crime Information Center (NCIC) System
- State/Regional/Local Law Enforcement Information Systems
- Local ordinances and codes
- Hazardous Materials
- Emergency Medical Dispatch/EMS Pre-Arrival Medical Instruction, etc

The APCO Standard Committee recommends that public safety telecommunicators be provided continuing education to maintain and enhance their knowledge, skill and abilities, and to keep current with changes in policies, procedures and technologies.

APPENDIX A

ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC-SAFETY OFFICIALS INTERNATIONAL, INC.

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INTRODUCTION:

This standard was approved and adopted by the APCO Executive Council at the APCO Executive Council meeting on Sunday, August 11, 1996, in San Antonio, Texas.

This standard has been modified to reflect the training requirements set forth by the State of Missouri. Those agencies that provide emergency dispatch services for more than one emergency service provider, the following standard shall be required to meet the 40 hour requirement.

MODULE 1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a) Organizations Mission
- b) Organizations and Telecommunicator Ethics and Values
- c) Telecommunicator Professionalism and Image
- d) Telecommunicator Characteristics and Skills
- e) Organizations Policies and Procedures
- f) Risk Management
- g) Service Area Geography
- h) Overview of Community and Agencies Served
- i) Telecommunicator role as part of Public Safety Team
- j) News Media Relations
- k) Resource Materials

MODULE 2. LEGAL ASPECTS APPLICABLE TO:

- a) Law Enforcement Agencies
- b) Fire/Rescue Agencies
- c) Public Safety Communications Agencies

MODULE 3. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

- a) The Communications Process
- b) Techniques -
 - listening
 - hearing
 - diction
 - empathy
- c) Processing Information -
 - perception
 - intuitiveness
 - judgment
- d) Customer Service

- e) Cultural Diversity -
 - race
 - nationality
 - speech/hearing impaired
 - disabilities
 - non-English speaking
 - demographics

MODULE 4. TECHNOLOGIES: *

- a) Telephones -
 - wire line, including portables
 - wireless (cellular and Personal Communications Service [PCS])
- b) Text Telephones (TTY) (for the speech and hearing impaired)
- c) 9-1-1 (Basic and Enhanced)
- d) Automatic Number Identification (ANI)
- e) Automatic Location Identification (ALI)
- f) Call Trace Procedure
- g) Computerized Maps
- h) Logging Recorders
- i) Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Systems
- j) Radios -
 - Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Rules
 - coverage
 - consoles

* as appropriate

MODULE 5. TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS TECHNIQUES AND CALL PROCESSING:

- a) Public Relations
- b) Call Receipt
- c) Interviewing
- d) Controlling the call
- e) Types of callers -
 - children
 - elderly
 - disabled
 - language barriers
 - etc.
- f) High Risk/Difficult Calls

MODULE 6. CALL CLASSIFICATION:

- a) Call categories -
 - Law Enforcement
 - Fire/Rescue
 - EMS
 - etc.
- b) Call types -
 - In progress, Just occurred, Late, etc.
 - type event reported

specific instructions to be provided
notifications to make
etc.

MODULE 7. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS (DISPATCH) TECHNIQUES:

- a) Procedures and Protocols
- b) Radio Discipline
- c) FCC Rules
- d) Public Safety Responder Safety

MODULE 8. STRESS MANAGEMENT:

- a) Causes
- b) Strategies for dealing with stress
- c) Peer support
- d) Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)

Those agencies that provide emergency dispatch services for only one emergency service provider and for agencies seeking re-certification the following standard and required hours shall apply to meet the 16 hour standard set forth by the State of Missouri.

MUST HAVE 2 HOURS FROM THE LIST IN MODULE 1

MODULE 1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A) Organizations Mission
- B) Organizations and Telecommunicator Ethics and Values
- C) Telecommunicator Professionalism and Image
- D) Telecommunicator Characteristics and Skills
- E) Organizations Policies and Procedures
- F) Risk Management
- G) Service Area Geography
- H) Overview of Community and Agencies Served
- I) Telecommunicator role as part of Public Safety Team
- J) News Media Relations
- K) Resource Materials

MUST HAVE 1 HOUR FROM THE LIST IN MODULE 2

MODULE 2. LEGAL ASPECTS APPLICABLE TO:

- A) Law Enforcement Agencies
- B) Fire/Rescue Agencies
- C) Public Safety Communications Agencies

MUST HAVE 2 HOURS FROM THE LIST IN MODULE 3

MODULE 3. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

- A) The Communications Process
- B) Techniques -
 - listening
 - hearing
 - diction

- empathy
- C) Processing Information
 - Perception
 - Intuitiveness
 - Judgment
- D) Customer Service
- E) Cultural Diversity
 - Race
 - Nationality
 - Speech/hearing impaired
 - Disabilities
 - non-English speaking
 - demographics

MUST HAVE 2 HOURS FROM THE LIST IN MODULE 4

MODULE 4. TECHNOLOGIES:*

- A) Telephones
 - wire line, including portables
 - wireless (cellular and Personal Communications Service [PCS])
- B) Text Telephones (TTY) (for the speech and hearing impaired)
- C) 9-1-1 (Basic and Enhanced)
- D) Automatic Number Identification (ANI)
- E) Automatic Location Identification (ALI)
- F) Call Trace Procedure
- G) Computerized Maps
- H) Logging Recorders
- I) Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Systems
- J) Radios –
 - Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Rules
 - Coverage
 - consoles

as appropriate

MUST HAVE 3 HOURS FROM THE LIST IN MODULE 5

MODULE 5. TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS TECHNIQUES AND CALL PROCESSING:

- A) Public Relations
- B) Call Receipt
- C) Interviewing
- D) Controlling the call
- E) Types of callers –
 - Children
 - Elderly
 - Disabled
 - language barriers
 - etc.
- F) High Risk/Difficult Calls

MUST HAVE 2 HOURS FROM THE LIST IN MODULE 6

MODULE 6. CALL CLASSIFICATION:

- A) Call categories –
 - Law Enforcement
 - Fire/Rescue
 - EMS
 - etc.
- B) Call types –
 - In progress, Just occurred, Late, etc.
 - type event reported
 - specific instructions to be provided
 - notifications to make
 - etc.

MUST HAVE 3 HOURS FROM THE LIST IN MODULE 7

Module 7. Radio Communications (Dispatch) Techniques:

- A) Procedures and Protocols
- B) Radio Discipline
- C) FCC Rules
- D) Public Safety Responder Safety

MUST HAVE 1 HOUR FROM THE LIST IN MODULE 8

MODULE 8. STRESS MANAGEMENT:

- A) Causes
- B) Strategies for dealing with stress
- C) Peer support
- D) Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)